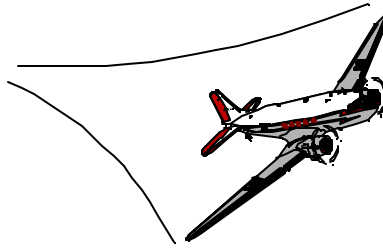


SPECIAL AIRWORTHINESS INFORMATION BULLETIN

Aircraft Certification Service
Washington, DC



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

No. CE-01-28
June 14, 2001

We post SAIBs on the internet at "av-info.faa.gov"

This is information only. Recommendations are not mandatory.

Introduction

This Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin (SAIB) alerts you, an owner or operator, of Piper PA-34-200 Seneca models, serial numbers 34-7250001 to 34-7450220, of possible cracks in the wing ribs on either side of the landing gear bay (wing stations 49.25 and 69.24).

Background

This SAIB is a result of FAA Accident Prevention Recommendations (APR) 98.010 and 98.042. These APRs report that cracks have occurred on aircraft that have not been modified in accordance with Piper Service Letter 757. This service letter announces the availability of a kit that strengthens the wing ribs. Note, this strengthened wing rib design has been used on production PA-34 Seneca models since 1975 with few reports of damage.

A review of the FAA Service Difficulty Report (SDR) database reveals approximately 75 reports of wing rib cracking since 1974. All reports are for the PA-34-200 model with the exception of three PA-34-200T models. Most reports occurred prior to 1979, however we continue to receive reports, but with a reduced frequency. The most recent report is from 2001.

The FAA notes that many of these reports specify that the SL 757 kit was not incorporated. Also a significant number of these reports attribute cracking to the type of aircraft usage. Aircraft being used for training, operated from grass strips, or that have suffered hard landings appear to be at a higher risk.

Recommendation

After reviewing the data from the APRs and SDRs, we recommend that you, an owner or operator, **perform immediate inspections of the subject ribs to determine if cracking exists**. You may perform this inspection in accordance with Airworthiness Directive 73-11-02 and Piper Service Bulletin 369, except we recommend you also inspect the wing station 49.25 rib.

If cracks are found, replace the damaged parts with new parts from Piper. Piper's supplied replacement parts should be those of the later design. We also recommend you ensure compliance with the following:

- Piper Service Bulletin 369, Inspection and Modification of Aft Wing Assembly
- Piper Service Bulletin 406, Inspection and Maintenance of Main Landing Gear Oleo Struts
- Piper Service Letter 757, Aft Wing Modification

If you elect **not to comply** with these recommendations, the FAA highly suggests, **you perform the recommended inspection at every annual and 100-hour inspection and after any hard landing.**

Note: Based on current information we, the FAA, only recommend these actions. We will continue this investigation and analyze any added information. We may require additional actions, such as the issuance of an Airworthiness Directive based on this analysis.

For Further Information Contact

William O. Herderich, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Central Region, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office, One Crown Center, 1895 Phoenix Boulevard, Suite 450, Atlanta, GA 30349; phone (770)-703-6082; fax (770) 703-6097; email: william.o.herderich@faa.gov